

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 17, 2003

Dear Conferee:

The blackout that swept across the Northeast and Midwest on August 14<sup>th</sup> affected 50 million people and cost our economy millions of dollars. Not only does the extent of the blackout itself illustrate that there is a problem with the transmission grid, but the fact that it is taking so long to elucidate the exact cause of the blackout demonstrates the need for a thorough modernization of the system. The hearings recently held in the House Energy and Commerce Committee illustrated that while our transmission grid is physically connected across a vast geographic area, in far too many cases it is managed on a piecemeal basis, state-by-state or utility-by-utility.

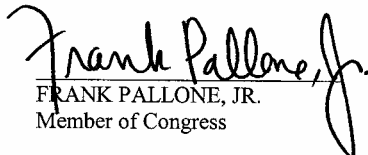
Without effective regional planning and management of the transmission grid, we will not see the investment in infrastructure to prevent future blackouts, and we will not be able to minimize the impact of system failures when they do occur.

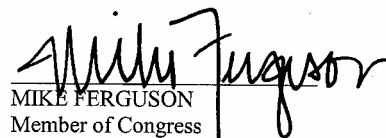
An initiative is underway at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to establish well-run, independent Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) to oversee the operation of the grid and foster regional planning. These RTOs are critical for reliability and for lowering costs to consumers through efficient dispatch of generation resources. Moreover, through a separate initiative, FERC is working to develop minimum characteristics of a well-run regional market.

We urge conferees **not** to approve any provision in the energy bill that would stall or undermine FERC's ability to require participation in Regional Transmission Organizations, or that would delay the creation of well-designed regional markets. Similar proposals were considered by the House Energy and Commerce Committee and rejected on a bipartisan basis.

There is simply too much at stake for Congress to take these important tools away from the federal agency charged with ensuring that our transmission system is able to carry reliable, affordable electricity to American consumers.

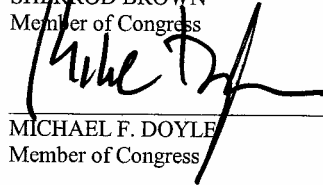
Sincerely,

  
FRANK PALLONE, JR.  
Member of Congress

  
MIKE FERGUSON  
Member of Congress



SHERROD BROWN  
Member of Congress




MICHAEL F. DOYLE  
Member of Congress



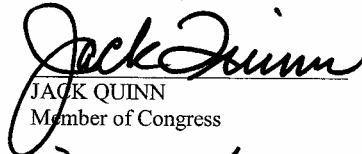
DONALD M. PAYNE  
Member of Congress



CHRISTOPHER SMITH  
Member of Congress



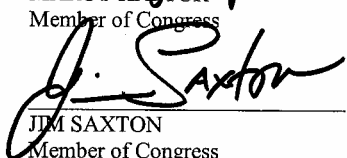
ROBERT ANDREWS  
Member of Congress



JACK QUINN  
Member of Congress



MARCY KAPTUR  
Member of Congress



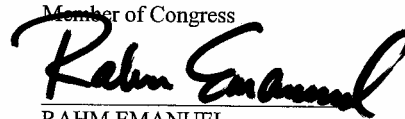
JIM SAXTON  
Member of Congress



PATRICK KENNEDY  
Member of Congress



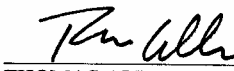
VITO FOSSELLA  
Member of Congress



RAHM EMANUEL  
Member of Congress



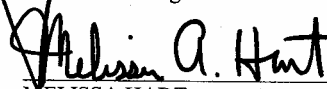
EDWARD J. MARKEY  
Member of Congress



THOMAS ALLEN  
Member of Congress



JAMES GREENWOOD  
Member of Congress



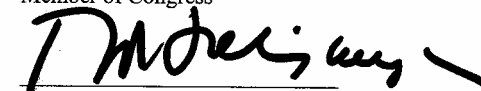
MELISSA HART  
Member of Congress



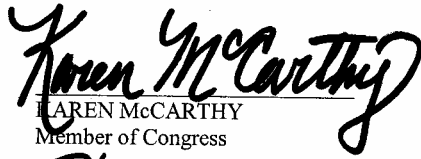
BILL PASCRELL, JR.  
Member of Congress

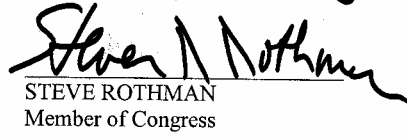


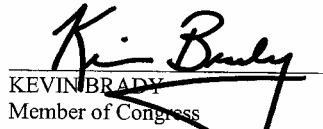
MICHAEL MICHAUD  
Member of Congress

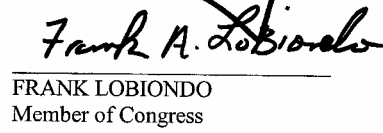


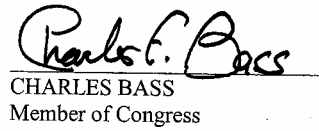
RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN  
Member of Congress

  
KAREN McCARTHY  
Member of Congress

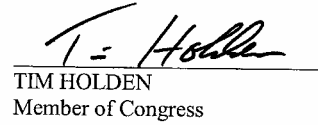
  
STEVE ROTHMAN  
Member of Congress

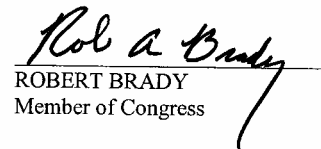
  
KEVIN BRADY  
Member of Congress

  
FRANK LOBIONDO  
Member of Congress

  
CHARLES BASS  
Member of Congress

  
C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER  
Member of Congress

  
TIM HOLDEN  
Member of Congress

  
ROBERT BRADY  
Member of Congress